



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(88) Date of publication A3:
07.07.2004 Bulletin 2004/28

(51) Int Cl.7: **G06F 11/34**

(43) Date of publication A2:
14.01.2004 Bulletin 2004/03

(21) Application number: **03300055.5**

(22) Date of filing: **08.07.2003**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR
HU IE IT LI LU MC NL PT RO SE SI SK TR
 Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK

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(30) Priority: **11.07.2002 US 192162**

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 Designated Contracting States:
DE ES FR GB IT

(54) **System and method for tracking utilization data for an electronic device**

(57) There is provided a system and method for tracking utilization data for an electronic device, the electronic device having a non-volatile data storage component associated therewith for retaining the utilization data. In an embodiment, the method comprises the steps of: a) after passage of a utilization interval, reading a first utilization data value for the electronic device stored in the non-volatile data storage component; b) incrementing said read value; and c) storing said incremented value into the non-volatile data storage component. In an embodiment, the electronic device is a circuit card operating in a communication switch, and the utilization data value is a time value indicating cumulative time of operation of the circuit card in the communication switch.

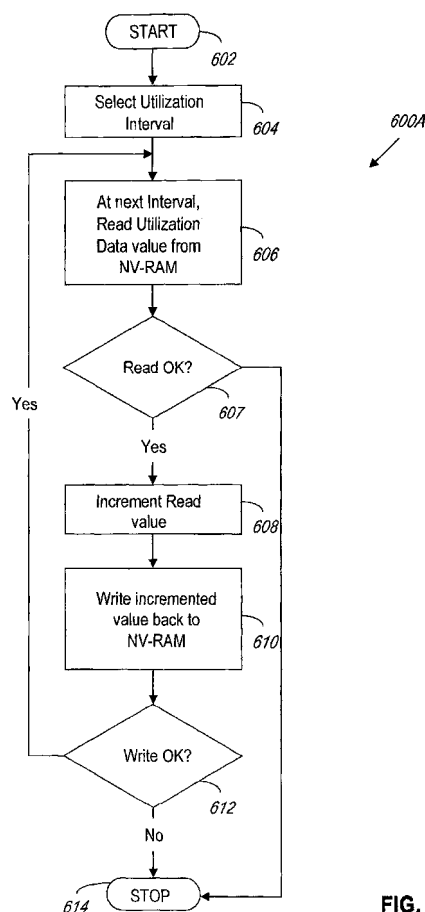


FIG. 6A



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 30 0055

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X	US 6 170 064 B1 (LEE JAE-SOON) 2 January 2001 (2001-01-02)	1-6, 10-19	G06F11/34
Y	* abstract; figures 5,6 * * column 5, line 8 - line 20 * * column 5, line 33 - line 45 * * column 6, line 31 - line 59 * * column 8, line 64 - column 9, line 2 * -----	7,9	
Y	US 6 076 050 A (KLEIN DEAN A) 13 June 2000 (2000-06-13) * abstract; figure 1 * * column 2, line 51 - line 57 * -----	7,9	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			G06F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 10 May 2004	Examiner Leuridan, K
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

EPO FORM 1503 03.02 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 03 30 0055

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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10-05-2004

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